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ON
HISTORY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY,
AS NECESSARY BRANCHES
OF SUPERIOR EDUCATION
IN FREE STATES.

A N
I N A U G U R A L A D D R E S S ,

DELIVERED
IN SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE,
BEFORE
HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR AND THE
LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE,
ON COMMENCEMENT DAY THE 7th OF DECEMBER, 1835.

BY FRANCIS LIEBER, LL. D.
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND POLITICAL ECONOMY.

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THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

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NOTICE.

THE new Professors of South Carolina College were invited, on their election, by the Board of Trustees, to deliver inaugural addresses before the Legislature of the State, at its next session. It is thus that the following pages are addressed to the Legislature and not to the Board of Trustees, as will appear from several passages.

In the Board of Trustees of the South Carolina College, at its sitting of Dec. 15th. 1835, the following resolution was proposed and adopted:

"Resolved, That the Professors be requested to furnish copies of their addresses, for publication; and that they be published, and the expense paid out of the College Treasury."

A true extract from the journal of the Board.

E. W. JOHNSTON,

Secretary of the Trustees.

GENTLEMEN,

When the city of Leyden, in common with all the Low Countries, had fought through the bloodiest, and, perhaps, the noblest struggle for liberty on record, the great and good William of Orange offered her immunity from taxes, that she might recover from her bitter sufferings, and be rewarded for the important services which she had rendered to the sacred cause. Leyden, however, declined the offer, and asked for nothing but the privilege of erecting a university within her walls, as the best reward for more than human endurance and perseverance.

This simple fact is a precious gem to the student of history; for if the protection of the arts and sciences reflect great honor upon a monarch, though it be for vanity's sake, the fostering care with which communities or republics watch over the cultivation of knowledge and the other ennobling pursuits of man, sheds a still greater lustre upon themselves. Nowhere, in the whole range of history, does man appear in a more dignified character, than when a republic founds a new seminary of learning, or extends her liberal aid toward the support of a scientific institution, in whose prosperity she takes a just and fruitful pride. It is by the exertion of the people themselves, by the fruits of their own labor, by the free grant of their own means, that these schools for the cultivation of knowledge and the education of their sons are erected. Nothing but their fullest conviction of the happy, purifying and invigorating effect, which the diffusion of sciences and the training of the youthful mind exercise upon society, can induce them to establish or protect these nurseries of civilization. It is a voluntary tribute brought by a whole community to the superiority of letters and sciences, to the great, universal cause of learning.

This consideration, gentlemen, renders the present moment one of pleasure indeed, but also of great solemnity to me. I address through you, fellow citizens, our State, which has not only founded the institution, to assist in the guidance of which you have called me; but it seems also that South Carolina, after an arduous and great struggle, directs her first attention to her College. Parties lately so strenuously opposed to each other, unite in the noble undertaking of using that impulse, which a contest for principle ever gives to a civil community, for the benefit of the institution, where the State expects her youth to be instructed, trained and educated in all the sciences and duties, which shall make them able to fill the most important stations in society and the highest places our country has to offer to talent and virtue. Thus has been verified our charter, which declares that one of the main objects for establishing the College has been, "to promote harmony within the whole community." You have reorganized this College, and it is natural that our whole State look with anxious expectation upon her highest school. These circumstances, together with my conviction that much good can be done, and, consequently, by omission, much evil, and the importance of the chair to which I have been called, make me contemplate, at times, my new situation with solicitude. Yet I take courage in the hope that Heaven will not withhold its blessing from my sincere desire to do the best I can, and my firm determination studiously to weigh and examine the suggestions which the wisdom of others or my own experience may make.

That you, gentlemen, be the better enabled to judge how far the course I intend to pursue, may answer your expectations, I shall state a few of my views respecting those sciences, which your board of Trustees has called me to teach in the College—History and Political Economy. With regard to education in general, I may be permitted to refer to a work where I have had occasion to develop my ideas at large; I mean my Constitution and Plan of Education for Girard College.* I have not found any reason to change what I have given there, as the result of my experience and meditation, nor does the different character of our College and the projected one in Philadelphia

* Published in Philadelphia, 1834.

affect the general and fundamental principles of education.

Of whatever kind the specific character of an institution for education may be, or in whatever branch a teacher may have to instruct, the great object of education must always remain the cultivation of the heart and the head, or, in other words, a moral and intellectual cultivation. The latter, or scientific education, ought again to consist of training and storing the mind—of storing it with sound knowledge and of training it in the habit of correct thought. It is at least as important that the student learn to study—to examine, inquire and conclude, that he contract scientific habits, and that a genuine, warming, cheering, animating love of knowledge be kindled within his soul, so that he may enter life as a being, longing for truth and capable of independent thought; as it is that he should take with him, from the College, a store of useful learning, which is to become the nucleus for every thing he may acquire, in future, by farther study or experience.

And as the youth, intrusted to the College, ought finally to exchange it for the busy scenes of life, with a healthy, vigorous and practical mind, well provided, in a scientific way, for the immense variety of knowledge which will burst upon him, with all the dangers of error, so ought the College to send him into the mazes and moral confusion of the world, and into all the temptations which never fail to beset the pleasant or the weary ways of the wanderer through life, healthful and strong in religion—that religion, which is truth, real life and real strength.

In this respect, too, the student ought not only to receive in our institution a store of religious knowledge, but his soul ought to have been trained in morals and religion, partly by the example of his teachers, partly by the friendly intercourse and incidental but constant advice and inciting instruction, which is possible by this intercourse only. There are few more precious gifts an institution like our College can bestow upon the youth reared within its walls, than the grateful remembrance of a teacher's friendship. I ask you, with whom experience has already proved the truth, whether it be not a gift which remains a rich treasure to the latest hour of our life, though all the scenes around us may have changed, and which we bless with gratitude whenever we reflect upon our pilgrimage.

If friendship and the relations of kindness and confidence

have rendered the heart susceptible, the moral advice as well as the scientific instruction of the teacher will sink into it as the grain sinks into carefully tilled ground, and germinates and brings fruit by itself. But they remain matter of memory only, cold, lifeless words, as if written on a tablet from which every accident may blot them, if kindness does not give them and affection does not receive them. Or they may be like words chisselled in marble—they may be deeply engraven, but the marble feels them not, and time erases them. Let the student leave the College with the examples of virtue as vivid images before his eye, that they may be ever ready to his mind in the sad days of trial; not like images, whose beauty, peradventure, he admires, though they have no effect upon his action, but like the familiar traits of beloved friends, whose memory he is ashamed to offend by unworthy acts. Let him before all, perceive and his soul be penetrated with the truth, that he stands such as he is, not as he appears to mortal eye, before his maker, who knows his very essence, without cloak or coloring, who looks into what we are, and weighs not what we profess; and who can only be served by the fervor of a pure heart and an honest mind, not by appearance, words or violence, not by hatred, or dissembling or persecution; who will not ask, to what class or set of men we have belonged, or under what name we have shielded ourselves, but before whom each shall have to answer for what each has done himself. “Single is each man born; single he dieth; single he receiveth the reward of his good, and single the punishment of his evil deeds.” Thus said an Eastern sage* a thousand years before the common era.

This important end, the moral cultivation of the student, it is in the power of every science taught in the College, to promote; mathematics, the natural sciences, philology by no means excepted; but to the province of none it belongs so peculiarly, as to the science which you have assigned to me, constantly to direct the mind of the student to the best and surest principles upon which human society is founded or for which nations have contended, to the conspicuous examples of virtue or vice, to the safe operation of wise laws or the detrimental course which cunning or fell ambition, shortsighted cowardice, and careless or intentional disregard of right

*Menu, the Hindu legislator. See the Ordinances of Menu in vol. iii. of the works of Sir William Jones, London, 1799, chap. iv. 240, or page 194.

and duty always take with individuals as well as with whole communities and nations.

History, in an ethical point of view, may be considered as practical morals, and in this respect it is of peculiar importance in the course of instruction pursued with the sons of republicans, who, at some future period, have themselves to guide the State, when no external force, no power above them, no consideration of interest foreign to the well-being of their own body politic, shall prescribe to them the course they have to steer; when the only compass they have to sail by, shall be their zealous ardor, their correct knowledge of duty, and their conscientious love of justice and liberty—I might say *or liberty*, for justice and liberty are in many respects synonymous. Then, when their genuine love of country alone shall influence their conduct as the makers, executors and defenders of the laws and institutions of their society,—in short, when they enter into political or any other practical life, it is a matter of moment indeed, whether the examples of stern duty and “*tenacious perseverance*,”* of wise societies, that have made their laws on the principles of right and truth, and have considered it a noble privilege of freemen to yield steady obedience to good laws—whether or not all the experience treasured up in history is before their eyes and induces them to prefer lasting fame, or essential good bestowed upon their country even without acknowledgement, to the ever changeable impulse of the moment.

The abstract is brought home to the human understanding by instances. We see this in the explanation of any general principle, in daily life, we see it with children, in sciences, in philosophy, in law and even in mathematics; we see it in the debates on the floor of legislative halls—in short, we find every where that, though there is in man a constant tendency to abstract and generalize, which forms the greater part of all thinking, there is likewise a constant necessity to individualize, and to bring home again to others and ourselves by individual cases, that which we have gained by the process of generalizing ratiocination. This is also the case with regard to religion and morals, to the principles of liberty and political ethics; and it is no mean prerogative of the science of histo-

ry, that she is able to exhibit patriotism, wisdom, rectitude and the most important principles which concern the well-being of man, or the opposite of these virtues and principles, embodied, made solid, cast in encouraging or warning examples, which the life of individuals or the fate of entire communities afford.

Another and a great benefit to be derived from a profound study of history or the correct teaching of its results—I do not speak of the superficial perusal of partial representations—is that this science makes us liberal in judging of past periods and foreign countries, as it makes us modest with regard to our own times, and cautious towards those who appear before the public, vaunting their new systems or discoveries of new principles, as if mankind had been destined to live on in ignorance and barbarity, until they at length made their appearance with all the requisite means for the foundation of man's happiness, so that human felicity will have to date from their birth or the publication of some of their works. There is an expanding power in the study of history, as well as one which gives acuteness and penetration.

On the other hand it is history again which enables us justly to appreciate the conquests which our own age may have made in the cause of civilization, and to separate the essential from the accidental, so that we may with greater firmness protect and defend its growth and expansion.

The study of history has a similar though more powerful effect, with that derived from extensive travelling. We travel back into former periods, and compare them to the present times. There we shall often find better things than we are possessed of; sometimes we shall see that things which looked so proud and noble at a distance, are inferior to what we have, though it may be less glittering or attractive to the unexperienced. Judicious travelling and impartial study of history make us just towards others and ourselves. History teaches us that mankind are not of to-day, that it was the will of the creator, that mankind should form a society—that human society should form one contiguous whole; one member, one period, one age of which always necessarily influences the next. Man is essentially a social being, in a moral sense much more so still, than in a physical; and society, again,

is essentially what it is, by its intimate connection with all previous ages. Who art thou, son of to-day? And where wouldst thou be, had not Columbus discovered, had not Portugal pressed on, had not Ptolomy erred, had not the Chaldeans observed the stars? What would be thy liberty, had not the signers been of British descent and yet familiar with ideas matured by the European continent; had not thy fathers dethroned the Stuarts, had not the barons extorted the charter, had not the Germanic tribes revived decaying Europe? What would be thy science and civilization, had not the Middle Ages struggled and speculated; the Arabians not collected, preserved and kindled; Rome not received, ripened, conquered and civilized; Etruria not pioneered and prepared; had Greece not refined and discriminated, colonized and traded,* fought, sung, built, recorded and meditated; had Egypt not organized, invented and husbanded†; India not contemplated?

Without a mother there is no son, and without a previous generation there is no present one. And were man bent on destroying the vessel which carried civilization from the past period to the one he lives in, it would be in vain—in vain and mad as it was when the French Convention decreed that all the documents in the archives should be burnt and all the seals should be broken in order to annihilate the history of their country. Man cannot travel out of his time, as surely not as

*“No nation of the ancient world has sent out so many colonies, as the Greeks; and these colonies have become so important in a variety of respects, that it is impossible to obtain a just view of the early periods of Universal History, without a proper knowledge of them. For with them is not only closely connected: *a.* the history of civilization of their mother country; but also *b.* the history of the early Universal Commerce; and *c.* some of these colonies became so powerful, that they exercised the most decided influence upon Political History.” Text Book of the History of the States of Antiquity, with particular Reference to their Constitutions, Commerce and Colonies, by A. H. L. Heeron, page 197. The expression Universal Commerce, (*Welthandel*) is used by the Germans to designate that commerce, which extends to all or most of the nations, known at the time, which consists of the great exchange of goods among the different and distant members of the human family, and is, therefore, always of paramount importance to the historian. Thus they would say: England and America are at present almost entirely in possession of the *Welthandel*.

†“Refutation of the idea, as if the Egyptian priests had been in possession of great speculative knowledge; whilst their science had, chiefly, reference to practical life, and thus became, in their hands, the *instrumenta dominationis* over the great mass, by which they made themselves indispensable, and kept the people in dependance.—Explanations of the close relation between their deities, their astronomic and mathematical knowledge on the one hand and agriculture on the other.” *Ibid.* page 75. Subsequent and extensive inquiries into the antiquities of Egypt by the Champollions, Belzoni and others have proved how high a degree of perfection the mechanical arts and agriculture had obtained with that early nation, and how much we owe them.

he cannot help being the child of his progenitor; he must build with the materials which his forefathers left him. He may and even must develop, add, improve and change, but foolish temerity only could dare to say: "I will begin anew." God has not made a people which shall date its civilization from a given day, but he created a species, which was gradually to develop itself.

Even principles of the most universal character receive, according to this decree, a different developement with different nations and in different periods; and as the simple truths of the gospel were and are embodied in different churches and different systems of theology in Greece, Italy, Germany, England, France and with ourselves, so has the inextinguishable desire for liberty existed wherever human breast has heaved; yet British liberty differs and must for ever differ from ours, and both will differ from French liberty, whenever firmly established; as modern liberty differs, and cannot otherwise but differ, from the liberty of the middle ages, and ancient freedom.

I trust, I am too well known to you, gentlemen, that I should be obliged to guard against a misunderstanding, as if I belonged either to the so called "historical school", which considers every thing, which has been handed down through generations, as lawful, good, wise and not to be touched; perhaps not even to be judged and freely examined, merely because it has been handed down: or to that political sect, which misapplies what I remarked above with regard to the necessary modifications of principles, and maintains that no entirely new institution, differing in character from the previous ones in a certain society, ought to be established, or any new principle to be adopted from others. I am equally far from either. All I wished to convey, is, that even if we adopt new principles and found new institutions, they again will attach themselves to our previous ones according to the elements of which our society consists, that there is no absolute re-beginning in history possible, and that the knowledge of this fact will make us cautious, in the same degree as a thorough acquaintance with history will make us bold, where boldness is required in order to change or even to destroy. However, I will not anticipate a subject on which I shall have to offer a few more remarks.

One great lesson of practical importance, learned from history by the simplest induction, is, that as we now look upon by-gone parties, once arrayed against each other in fearful contest, and as we adjudge to each some wrong, or, as we judge of the one far milder than their contemporary adversaries did, so shall posterity look upon our strifes and conflicts. Let us then learn one of the greatest acts of wisdom, to anticipate the judgement of time, and divest ourselves of partial and party views, and assume a loftier station from which we may contemplate our friends as well as our opponents with greater justice. It is difficult and yet necessary for the true valuation of events and actions, passing before our own eyes, that we should extricate ourselves from all the personal effects which they may produce upon us, should reduce the apparent magnitude with which objects, close before us, appear compared to distant, though in reality much larger objects, and should see them in their natural connection with the many others which surround them, as if seen from a distant elevation. This we learn best by studying history; it is this historical bird's eye view which constitutes one of the choicest acquisitions, to be obtained in no other way. Our mind becomes gradually accustomed to see the various subjects, striking, dazzling or perplexing at their time, as if they were of greater importance than any thing that ever had appeared before on the horizon of history, in their true light and bearing, and thus skilled—for a skill it is—we find it easier to judge correctly of present things. He is a wise man who can reflect on present things as calmly as if they had been recorded long ago on the pages of history, and who can weigh matters of history with an earnestness and energy, and all the penetrating power of lively interest, as if they were events of his own times; he is a wise statesman who has learned to use his personal experience as a clew to decipher history, and who can use history as a clew to decipher the often mysterious pages of his own age.

I am no advocate of theories which cannot possibly be realized, or which, if put into practice, would injure the best side most. It was, therefore, not my intention to indicate by my remarks, that it would be truly wise always to look upon two contending parties in our own times, with indifference,

persuaded that both are partly right and partly wrong. I know full well that in order to obtain great objects, we are obliged to unite the power of many, and that, in order to obtain this, compromise with regard to minor objects is requisite ; in short, that frequently the action by party cannot be dispensed with ; and, also, that history has recorded contests in which no peace was possible before one of the conflicting parties was annihilated. There was in Italy no rest and quiet possible as long as there existed Guelphs and Ghibellines ; and the time is drawing near, when, in Europe, one or the other of the two great contending parties must be annihilated. For history teaches us, that, however salutary the check of different parties upon each other may be, and however noble a feature of the British annals it is, that in them we find the first developement of a regular and lawful opposition ;* yet as soon as two parties, both provided with intellectual and physical means, cease to agree even on their first and original starting point, as soon as they radically disagree, then the period of that misunderstanding begins, which thwarts every good purpose, disjoins every link, in which distrust changes the very language, made to be the tie of man, into a means of confusion and ill-will, and the chasm between the two is increased by every uttered word : until at length the contest of annihilation cannot be any longer avoided—the period of labor before the birth of a new era. What, however, shall enable us to make this momentous distinction ? How are we to ascertain whether the contest be really on primary and fundamental points, or whether our own excitement only paints to us the struggle in so glaring colors ? Nothing on earth but the experience, which the mind gathers in wandering through history.

If the study of this science has enabled the student to judge more calmly of the contest he is himself engaged in, he will be the firmer, the more decided and persevering, the clearer he has perceived that the existing struggle is one which will be found important in the cause of mankind even before the tribunal of posterity.

* I have given my views on this important subject of modern history, more at length in my : *Stranger in America*, pages 39 and seq. London edit. ; pages 31 and seq. Philadelphia edition.

This with regard to events; as to theories, how many apparently new ones, in science, religion and politics, are stripped of all their charm of novelty and the exciting power they exercise upon the vanity of man, as soon as they are known to have attracted and excited in the same degree, centuries ago! And to how many apparently insignificant facts is not at once the attention of him directed who is able to discern that their characteristics present entirely new features!

But are we able to rely on history? Does not our daily experience of the many obstacles in the way of arriving at truth even of facts which have happened within the narrowest circle around us, within our own family, shake all confidence in history? Ought we not rather to follow those who break through the difficulty by the pretence that they believe nothing, or, at least rely on nothing, except on what they have perceived by their own senses? May we not in particular feel disposed to distrust all history as a suspicious witness, when in our own times a great historian has thrown at least a very serious doubt over a whole portion of the annals of mankind, received without suspicion by the successive generations of many thousand years? Does not history lose on this account her claims to the title of a science? Is it not true, what one of the shrewdest observers, that ever recorded the events of their own times, Cardinal Retz, says in his Memoirs, that "all we read in the lives of most men is false?"* Ought we not to disown history as Raleigh burnt his manuscript?

History, or that which we find recorded and the consequent opinion of posterity—may err.† No doubt can exist as to this

* Cardinal Retz gives, in vol. I of his Memoirs, an interesting account of a drive he took with Marshal Turenne, when both of them mistook a distant procession of friars for an apparition of ghosts. Both started to meet them; Turenne so calm and grave that Cardinal Retz said the next day, he would have sworn that Turenne had been afraid, though the latter assured him, that not only had he not been afraid, but his first sensation had been that of joy, because he had always longed to see ghosts; and farther, that he would have sworn that Cardinal Retz had not had the slightest fear, on the contrary that he had likewise been glad to meet with this apparition, while Retz candidly confessed that he had been really afraid, but put on the semblance of alacrity merely from shame. He then makes the above reflection, with several acute remarks.

† To be distinct, I will give my definition of history: History is a scientific account of the authenticated and remarkable facts which have influenced the social state of man or bear testimony of its state at a given period. The word *fact* is taken here in the widest sense which can be given to it accord-

point. I do believe that posterity may be belied. Pretended facts may be so plausibly represented, and they may be of so peculiar a character, that contradiction becomes impossible, and posterity receive them as truth. Merit or guilt may be undeservedly assigned. We never gain by deceiving ourselves, and it is as little true that history always awards the true share to every agent in an important transaction, as it is in common morals true that every criminal will meet, at length, with his due, by the arm of human justice, the frequent repetition of this assertion, even in the form of proverbs, notwithstanding. But though it be a most noble task of history to constitute the supreme tribunal of which posterity forms the jury, and though it may succeed in many and important cases in ferreting out the precise truth; yet this is not her highest task. Her most elevated problem is to find out the moral causes of the great events which influence the fate of the human species, and to represent them according to their internal and necessary connection. Well may be applied to her in this respect, the inscription over the anatomical theatre at Havana :

*Plus quam vita loquax mors taciturna docet.**

As we are abler to judge of the features of an extensive plain, when we are at a distance and on an elevation, so we are more capable of determining the character of a whole period at a distance from it, if we have previously endeavored to ascertain by minute study the accurate state of many of its component parts. Individuals and single events must be known, yet the higher object of history is to study institutions, and the masses, of which the individuals, however distinguished and in whatever eminent a degree they may appear at the time as the leaders, form but a part. They think they lead, but they are led.† Without this, the inquiry into the institu-

ing to its etymology, including single acts, events and institutions. That the account be scientific, requires that the facts be presented in their proper order, according to their true and essential connection with each other; so that a historical relation is a picture, not an enumeration. The same definition applies to any special history, with the exception only that we have to place the special society, science, art or institution under consideration, instead of "social state of man."

*This inscription was at least to be placed there, according to the *Diario de la Habana* Nov. 20, 1834. The whole is this :

Naturæ Ingenium Dissecta Cadavera Pandunt :
Plus Quam Vita Loquax Mors Taciturna Docet.

† *Der ganze Strudel strebt nach oben ;
Du glaubst zu schieben und du wirst geschoben.*

(Mephist. in the Walpurgisn. in Faust.)

tions, and the causes which moved the masses, history is but party history, little more than a chronicle of party events.

Whether Casca really gave the first blow to Cæsar on the fatal Ides of March,* may never be ascertained with undisputable certainty; but it will for ever be a matter of history beyond a doubt, that a great man of the name of Julius Cæsar lived toward the beginning of the vulgar era. Whether this great man was animated by noble designs, after having arrived at the fullest conviction that Rome could not possibly continue to exist with her ancient republican form of government, and that her whole polity required a thorough change, or whether he followed mainly the impulse of selfish ambition, when he defied the established law of his country, and crossed the Rubicon—in other words, the internal history of that extraordinary man, may remain for ever an unsettled question; but it will, nevertheless, remain a matter of historical certainty, that this individual was an instrument to fulfill the great destiny of Rome, to conquer uncivilized countries, and to engraft Roman institutions upon theirs, to carry, over Western Europe, the seeds of Roman civilization, after it had matured within the narrower limits of Italy. Or are we to believe, with Hardouin, that all the Greek and Roman historians are the spurious productions of inventive monks?

Whether Galilei was or was not tortured, or threatened with the rack, when he stood before the tribunal of the inquisition, may be a question never to be decided on positive and satisfactory evidence;† but it is, nevertheless, a well founded and proven fact in the history of human thought, that we behold in the case of Galilei another instance of the labors and

[The whole whirling mass strives upwards;

Thou believest thou pushest, but thou art pushed.]

These well known words of Goethe find no readier application any where than in history, as so many other wise sayings put by that great poet in the mouth of the arch-fiend.

*Plutarch, Life of Julius Cæsar.

† Some individuals have at least strong suspicions that Galilei was tortured; see for instance Mr. Niebuhr's opinion in my *Reminiscences* of Mr. Niebuhr, page 201 London edition, page 200 Philadelphia edition: others disbelieve it. I incline to the latter, not because I consider his persecutors incapable of such an act; for we know that the torture was at that time, on the European Continent, considered a lawful means of eliciting truth, and we know too that the tribunals which judged of men's opinions, made a most liberal use of this convenient instrument. My view of the case is founded upon the fact that Galilei had many powerful friends, and that he was, while at Rome, during his persecution, in a degree under the protection of Florence. Still, it is quite possible.

struggles, unavoidable when mankind sever themselves from any system or institution, which has exerted an extensive and penetrating influence, and the gates of a new era are forced open; that mankind will, for ever, be divided into two great parties, the one zealous to maintain that which is established, the other anxious to shake off the fetters of authority, and moving on, conscious of the independence of the human intellect; that Aristotle, the master of thought, after having strongly affected those distant and entirely foreign children of the East, even when their religious phrenzy swept every thing before them, had ruled the mind of man for many centuries, though misconstrued, misjudged and misapplied, and had thus firmly fastened on the human mind, that men of so powerful intellect and such greatness of soul, as the sage of Pisa, were requisite, to wrestle the great charter of free inquiry from the clinching hands of dogma and dictation; and that those who have not been endowed with the capacity of enjoying the sublime pleasure of searching and finding truth, will ever be prompted by envy and fear for their authority or interest, to stigmatize the faithful priests of truth, and to use that power, which the bulk of ignorance always places at their disposal, to overwhelm and crush the first and single fighting heroes of a great cause.

History is, like all other sciences, but a human science, and, therefore, subject to error; but is astronomy not any longer a science, because Sir John Herschel informs us from the Cape of Good Hope, that the comet he has observed with his powerful instrument, moves in a different orbit from the path calculated by the astronomers according to the theory of the immortal Gauss, and which had been found correct in all previous instances?

The task of the historian is always an arduous and solemn one, whether he act as the conscientious recorder of truth, as Herodotus seems to have felt the whole dignity of his vocation. After having stated the names of several individuals, who had been mentioned at his time as having done the treacherous deed of guiding the Persians over the mountains, by which Leonidas and his brave band were surrounded and slain, he solemnly continues: "But Epialtes has been the man who guided them on the path over the mountains, and him I write down as the wicked one."* Or as Gibbon must have felt it, when musing

* Herodotus, vii. (Polymnia) 214.

amidst the ruins of the Campo Vaccino, and the muse of history inspired him with the great idea of writing the downfall of the mightiest empire.

Or whether the historian pursue the path of truth, ready to sacrifice long cherished opinions or endeared delusions, and to receive the sneers of his contemporaries as the reward of his toilsome labor, neither bent upon an ingenious defence of a theory which flatters his vanity, nor fearful of encountering powerful opposition, as Niebuhr did, when he blotted out many chapters of history, remembered by all of us with fondness.

Or whether he serve the sacred science by teaching it to the youth; when he shows them how one society, institution, or system, how one age and century, how one race grew out of the preceding one and trod over its grave; how and why one state of things began, grew and rose to eminence, and why it sunk, decayed and fell.

I know of but few stations more dignified than that of a public teacher of history; scarcely of one more elevated than that of a teacher appointed by a republic to instruct her children in civil history. For if history is a science important to every one, it is peculiarly so to republicans—to members of a community which essentially depends upon institutions. If they have to defend them against open attacks or plausible heresies, they must know them, must be well acquainted with their essential character, as well as with the insinuating plausibility and the ruinous consequences with which those undermining heresies have been advanced with other nations and in distant ages. History is the memory of nations; oh! how many have been lost for want of this memory, and on account of careless, guilty ignorance!

If they have to develop and improve their institutions; if they have to adapt them to the gradual changes of time, which is as necessary as unbending resistance against encroachments made upon others, it is equally necessary for the citizen to know them; and an institution is not known by its name, or charter, but by its operation, its history. If they have to watch over the dearest interests of man, perhaps in a small minority against a broad current of popular delusion, they ought to have the examples of men before their eyes, who preferred to fall in a righteous cause rather than to be borne along on the swelling

tide of enticing popularity. If they are expected to be consistent, and if no citizen can be consistent through life, who has not buckled on the armor of fortitude, then their souls ought early to be prepared for that civil buoyancy, which bears up against all painful disappointments, and commands over new means and resources after each loss. And what can prepare us for this manly cheerfulness? Nothing but elevated views and devotion to principle. What, however, gives us this enlargement of the soul? Our knowledge of the gradual progress of man.

If ambition or the power of emulation is one of the primary and most active agents in the whole moral creation, which God has planted in the heart of man as one of his noblest attributes, and if no society can be so low, so abject, so foul as when this moral element is extinguished in the bosom of its members, then they ought to learn in their early youth, by striking examples, how necessary and how dangerous an agent it is, how it has stimulated great men to overcome the most disheartening obstacles, and how it has ruined men whom nature seemed to have formed as a boast of her powers; that ambition, as all other elementary agents in the moral or physical world, as fire and water, brings us thousandfold blessings, if watched and guided, but woe and misery, if, a maddened element, it breaks down the dykes and mounds of law and reason, and rushes over fertile fields and plains, cultivated by the care of generations, to leave behind it the blast of sterile sand which chokes the tenderest vegetation, and stints and cripples all vigor, joy and life of nature.

If the power of building up or destroying rest in its plenitude with the people, then they ought to learn, when young, the principles which must direct their actions, and the modifications which these principles have to undergo if applied. If those who now are under the care and guidance of this institution founded by the state, have in turn to guide her helm, then they ought to know how to navigate the vessel of the state between the cliffs and dangers of politics; they ought to know where others, who sailed before them, have been wrecked, and they ought to learn in time to distinguish an approaching pirate by his suspicious movements, and not to be beguiled by friendly colors, until it is too late to resist the fiend. And let us not

forget that the sea of politics is nowhere an open, easy main, on which only common skill in navigation is required; except perhaps in some cases, where the vast waters of absolute power roll their monotonous waves. The politics of liberty require watchful helmsmen, wise pilots, who have taken out their license in the school of experience, and history must lay down the chart by which they have to weather the dangerous points and breakers.

If they shall love liberty they ought to know how precious a good it is; how powerfully she has inspired men of all nations and all ages, even so powerfully that some of them have been willing to toil in repelling those attacks, which are not recorded, because they were repelled. It is easy to die for our country, but it is difficult to live a laborious life for her when the victory becomes hardly known.

To prepare youths for these, the greatest exertions of a citizen, it is necessary to exalt their souls by the views which history alone can open to them, and to show them how sacred those interests are which require these exertions. If the purest patriotism shall be kindled in their bosoms, let them see that the principles which they maintain are eternal, and that the country for which they live is not an accidental mass of men, made up but to-day, but that they are integrant parts of a society, for which others, long passed by, have lived as they are expected to live: If they are to be put on their guard against that enthusiasm, which evaporates with the first bitter experience, it is equally necessary to imbue them with sound knowledge of their country and of mankind in general, that they may be safe against the maddening enticements of brilliant phantoms.

Two things seem to me of equal importance to a good citizen; if the one or the other be wanting no safety can exist for a free state, and liberty is at most but a happy accident—I mean cheerful devotion and jealous distrust. Where the former is wanting, where the state is founded upon mere negative principles, where the “constitution is nothing but an act of distrust for the future security of a people,”* as it was lately proclaimed from the French tribune, society is essentially dissolved, and must hasten to a speedy end, or drag on the unpro-

*Thouvenel in the session of the French Chamber in 1831.

ductive life of anarchy. Where the latter, distrust, is wanting, the people will soon be enslaved. Many nations have fallen under the hands of tyranny, from gratitude! The words of one of the greatest defenders of liberty, that ever spoke to that people, "with whom liberty had been a passion, an instinct,"* should for ever be remembered by all citizens of a free country. Demosthenes said to his Greeks, when, indeed, conceited selfsufficiency and excess of liberty or rather lawlessness† had made them unworthy of that liberty, which was the breath of his life: "Many things have been invented to protect and defend cities, such as ramparts, walls, fosses and other things of the kind; and all these things are made by the hands of men and require exertion; but the nature of wise men contains in itself a common protection, useful and salutary to all, but especially so to the people against tyranny. And what is this? Distrust. This preserve; in this confide. As long as you retain this, no evil will befall you."‡ So far Demosthenes.

It is these two elements of sound and true patriotism with which it shall be my endeavor to imbue the scholars, in leading them through the successive periods of history, and thus to assist in preparing them for the weighty and responsible duties which every one of them will have to fulfil at some future period, as citizens of a free republic; it is according to these views, which I have had the honor briefly to exhibit to you, that I shall try to teach the science, and to teach how to study it; and according to which it is my anxious desire to establish the necessary relation between the scholars and myself. I wish to be considered by them as their friend. Sincere as I know these wishes to be, and if I am not quite an unworthy son of that nation to which the palm of patient and extensive investigation, and comprehensive views in history has been awarded,§

* Westminster Review, No. xxxii.

† Plato de Rep. viii. 14. p. 562. b., translated by Cicero de Rep. i. 43: *Quum enim inexplebiles populi fauces exaruerunt libertatis siti, malisque usus ille ministris, non modice temperatam, sed nimis meracem libertatem sitiens hauserit* &c.

And ibid. c. 15. p. 562 E. Cicero c. 44. *nam ut ex nimia potentia principum oritur interitus principum, sic hunc nimis liberum populum libertas ipsa servitute adficit. Sic omnia nimia—in contraria fere convertunt, maximeque in rebus publicis evenit; nimiaque illa libertas et populis et privatis in nimiam servitutem cedit.*

‡ Second Philipp. p. 71. 19—23.

§ In the Introduction to the British and Foreign Review, or European Quarterly Journal, lately established, it is said, on page 7:

(I use the words of an English writer) may I not hope that my labors may not remain without some good effect ?

Civil history, the main subject of instruction in history in the college, will necessarily lead to inquiries into the various subjects of politics. It is not only my intention to treat of them while I am proceeding in history, but also to teach them, if time can be found, in separate lectures. On the other hand I shall always endeavor to exhibit the whole state of civilization of a country or period under discussion, and try to give a rapid sketch of the literature, the state of sciences, the arts, its commerce and agriculture, which will lead to touch upon subjects more properly belonging to the other science for which you have appointed me. As I shall have frequent occasion to speak on the subject of politics, so will the introduction of history often lead me to topics of political economy, and in the same way shall I make them the subject of separate instruction.

Political Economy, treated as a scientific whole, is of comparatively late origin, though various subjects, belonging to its province, have at different times been treated even in remote periods. There are still many persons, who "do not believe in political economy," and will of course not allow it the rank of a science, as a few years ago, when Werner broke a new path for mineralogy, many people, and most dis-

"The muse of history has ever been considered as looking with a benignant eye upon her own province in British literature. Nor would it be difficult to mention names which have shed glory upon their country, by the fidelity as well as elegance of their recitals; and, by a peculiar felicity of arrangement of topics, have succeeded in keeping curiosity awake, during a protracted history of ages, by no means abounding in attractive incidents and characters. But still in the patient and indefatigable search of truth, in pursuing her faintest traces through the labyrinth of error in which the imposture or credulity of ancient annalists have frequently involved her; in the successful perseverance with which they disencumber the precious ore from the worthless mass in which it is concealed, and in reducing legends into genuine history, we must, at this day, yield the palm to Teutonic industry and zeal. Nor should we be justified in concluding that, because their search is minute, their views are short-sighted. They seem, indeed, to combine an extreme minuteness of observation, with a telescopic range of vision; and to draw their conclusions with a soundness of judgment, which shows that they see objects, at last, in their natural colors, and true dimensions. If we may justly claim the distinction of having brought philosophy to the feet of history, to gather materials from which to construct her system, and to demolish those which had been reared on the basis of imagination, modern Germany has the credit of having reversed the process, by placing the instructress under the tuition of her pupil, and thus teaching history to test the probability and truth of her statements, by the canons of philosophy. Already have they shown by the application of this new standard of credibility, that many of the most familiar passages of ancient history are not merely improbable, but impossible; and instead of being the faithful records of facts, are the fictions or amplifications of oral and popular tradition."

tinguished ones among them, smiled at the idea of calling mineralogy a science, or believing in the possibility of systematically and scientifically treating what they called "the stones."* Nay, there are still persons who deny that geology be a science. Whether political economy be a science or not, it is not here the place to discuss, though it is difficult to see why the difference of opinion and contradictory results at which some, though few, political economists have arrived, should any more deprive their study of the character of a science, than natural philosophy, metaphysics, medicine or theology; nor is it required that any one should *believe* in political economy. The simple question is whether the subjects it considers as peculiarly belonging to its forum, are susceptible of scientific inquiry, and whether they are of sufficient importance to require investigations of this kind and to be taught in our college.

I believe it is easy to show that the same relation, which physiology of the human body bears to anthropology and philosophy in general, subsists between political economy and the higher branches of politics—or, political economy has precisely all the importance with regard to society, which the material life bears throughout to the moral and intellectual world. Political economy might be defined by being the science which occupies itself essentially with the material life of society—with production, exchange and consumption; and no one can possibly have thrown a single glance at these subjects, and deny that they stand in the most intimate connection with the moral and intellectual interests of a nation.

If subjects of such universal influence and so extensively affecting the existence of human beings, as labor, wages, capital, interests, commerce, loans, banks, &c. are not matter of sufficient interest for inquiry, then few things are; if they do not depend upon general causes cognizable by the reason of man, then every thing around us is chance, and what is very striking, most regular chance, for it would be strange indeed that in the United States, for instance, many millions of people agree, without exchange of opinions, to pay throughout an immense territory about seventy-five cents for a day's work of a com-

* See among others some of the letters written by Herder to Goethe, who, it is well known, was an ardent mineralogist and geologist to the end of his life.

mon laborer, and that in another immense country, at the north of Europe, many millions of people receive for the same work a few kopecks only, with a uniformity which is perfectly perplexing if the same general cause does not produce respectively this uniform effect. No believer in chance has ever dreamt that the regularity in form, process of growth and ripening of a species of plant be the results of mere chance. Though he might believe that the first cause was chance, he would always allow that by the original mixture of atoms or elements, certain laws were produced according to which nature now effects all the processes which strike us by their regularity; but in our own case, when we speak of human society, we shall at once change the test, and not believe that general, uniform and regular effects must depend upon fixed causes!

If these causes can be discovered, and what earthly reason is there that they should not? then it is the duty of man to discover them. Having found them, he will be able to subject them to the same processes of reasoning which he applies to every mass of homogeneous facts. Judicious combination and cautious induction will enable him to reason from them and conclude upon new results. If, however, these inquiries are of general interest and importance, they are certainly so to a citizen, who takes an active and direct part in the making of the laws which govern his own society, for they touch upon matters which most frequently become the subject of legislation. It is necessary then that the youths be instructed in this science.

Political economy has not appeared under the most favorable train of circumstances. It is not its lot quietly to investigate a given subject, but it has to combat a series of systematized prejudices, which have extended their roots far and wide into all directions and deep into every class of society, for many centuries past—prejudices which are intimately connected with the interest of powerful classes.

Strange, that man should have seriously to debate about free trade any more than about free breathing, free choice of color of dress, free sleeping, free cookery, and should be obliged to listen to arguments, which, if true, would also prove that the cutting, clipping and shaving of trees, fashionable in the times of Louis XIV, produced most noble, healthful oaks. Still, so ancient is the prejudice, that even Strabo mentions the

fact that the Cumæans did not levy any duties on merchandize, imported into their harbor, as a proof of their enormous stupidity. The transition is not easy from so deep-rooted a prejudice and whole systems of laws built upon it, to the natural, simple and uncorrupted state of things, in which man is allowed to apply his means as best he thinks, without fettering and cramping care from above, which is like the caresses of the animal in the fable—stifling.

Two different directions of scientific inquiry seem to be characteristic of our age—minute, extensive and bold inquiry into nature and her laws and life, and equally bold and shrewd examination of the elements and laws of human society, and all that is connected with its physical or moral welfare. Hence we see at once the human mind following two apparently opposite directions with equal ardor—history and political economy. No age has pursued with so much zeal the collection of every remnant and vestige, which may contribute to disclose to us the real state of former generations ; and in no age have the principles upon which the success of the human species depends, been investigated with less reserve. Your Board of Trustees has appointed me for these two important sciences, and I feel gratified thus to be placed in a situation, in which I am able to contribute largely to the diffusion of two sciences, which are cultivated with such intense activity by the age in which my lot has been cast.

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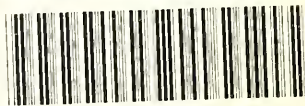
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